

THE EASTERN ANTHROPOLOGIST

EDITOR : D. N. Majumdar

FOREIGN EDITOR : C. von. Furer-Haimendorf

ASSOCIATE EDITOR : S. C. Dube

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THE EASTERN ANTHROPOLOGIST

(A Quarterly Record of Ethnography and Folk Culture)

EDITOR : Prof. D. N. Majumdar, M.A., Ph.D. (Cantab) F.N.I.

FOREIGN EDITOR : Prof. C. von Furer - Haimendorf, Ph.D.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR : Dr. S. C. Dube, M.A., Ph.D.

SECRETARIES : Miss Anima Mukerjee, M.A.

Mr. K. S. Mathur, M.A.

Notice To Contributors To The Eastern Anthropologist

The Eastern Anthropologist is a quarterly Journal published from Lucknow.

Each number of the Journal will include (1) Original Articles, (2) Notes and comments including the announcements and reports of the proceedings of the Ethnographic and Folk-Culture Society, (3) Brief communications, including short original notes and correspondence, (4) Research News and Views and (5) Reviews of Recent Books.

All communications printed in the Eastern Anthropologist are signed or initialed by their authors. The Council of the Society desires it to be understood that in giving publicity to them it accepts no responsibility for the statements and opinions expressed by them.

Contributors are requested to send their manuscripts clearly typed on one side of the paper, giving accurate references of literature they cite. Books for review, and reprints of papers for notice in the 'Research News and Views' section, as well as original articles and notes should be sent to :

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

The fifth annual meeting of the Ethnographic & Folk Culture Society, was held on the 23rd February, 1951, in the Municipal Hall under the chairmanship of the Hon'ble Dr. Sampurnanand, M.A., D.Litt., Minister in charge of finance and education, Uttar Pradesh. More than five hundred persons representing all sections of the Lucknow Public attended. A scientific drama 'Culture at Cross Roads' was staged by the Society and was much appreciated by the company. The Secretary in his report detailed the activities of the society, during the year.

Working in close cooperation with the anthropology Department of the Lucknow University, the Society has been carrying on the study of cultural dynamics in the tribal pockets of Uttar Pradesh in Mirzapur, in the Tarai region and in the Dehradun district. The work has fairly advanced and the results will be published soon.

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The Secretary referred to the reports of Government's intention to replace the *Dastoor-I-Amal* or the customary tribal code by the legal code of the country in the tribal pockets of the U. P., and urged the Government to go slow, for the discomforts that will result, are likely to impede rehabilitation of the tribes.

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The Society has granted a research fellowship to a post-graduate student to work on tribal religions of Uttar Pradesh, and the Provincial Government has now awarded a government scholarship to the same student to complete the work.

tion, (4) the distribution of families, (5) the household, (6) occupations, (7) leisure and recreation, (8) clubs and associations, (9) institutions educational and religious, (10) aesthetics and (11) vices.

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The work of the Survey has been divided into five committees as follow.

(1) Educational, (2) Economic, (3) Socio-Cultural, (4) Medical and (5) Women, each with a convener. The following constitute the group of conveners, Prof. N. K. Sidhanta, Prof. D. P. Mukherjee, Prof. V. S. Manglik, Prof. D. N. Majumdar and Dr. (Miss) Bina Roy. The statistical work will be attended to by Dr. J. K. Pande, Director of Economics and Statistics, U. P. Government, and some of the Senior teachers of the Department of Economics & Sociology, Lucknow University.

The Municipal Board has placed a grant of Rs. 10,000/- at the disposal of the Society for the Survey. The investigation will start in April, 1951, and is expected to be completed within the academic year, 1951-52.

THE USE OF THREAD-CROSSES IN LEPCHA LAMAIST CEREMONIES

R. VON NEBESKY-WOJKOWITZ AND GEOFFREY GORER

The pre-Buddhist Bön¹ faith of Tibet, remnants of which are still to be found in that country, employs in its ceremonies complicated, mast-like structures, consisting of sticks, thread and tufts of wool. These structures, technically known as "thread-crosses",² are called Dó (spelled *mDos*), Domo (*mDos mo*) or Ye (*Yas*) by the Tibetans. After its introduction into Tibet, the Buddhist religion incorporated into its system many of the aboriginal deities and numerous magical ceremonies of the Bön ; it also took over the use of thread-crosses.

Although many western travellers observed and reported the use of these curious structures in various parts of Tibet, no comprehensive report on the purpose of the thread-crosses and the complicated rituals, accompanying their construction seems to have been published. Some information can, however, be gathered from various books on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism.³ Summarizing our present knowledge we may say that thread-crosses are used in Tibetan religious ceremonies for the following purposes :

(1) As contraptions for catching demons. When applied in this way, they are put in front of objects, which they are supposed to protect (monasteries, villages, etc.) the idea being that approaching malignant spirits get caught in the net of the thread-cross, like flies in a spider's web. It is therefore regarded as necessary to renew the contraption and to destroy the old thread-cross when the *mDos* has served its purpose for some time and become "saturated" with the powers of evil ; this is usually done by pulling it down and burning it ceremonially. It is interesting to note that parts of the destroyed thread-cross are sometimes suspended above the doors of houses, fastened on the ceiling or placed near the image shrine as "charms for good luck",

in spite of the fact that the *mDos* is in this case regarded as an abode of evil forces.⁴ Indeed, after the destruction of the structure a fight regularly ensues between laymen attending the ceremony, everyone trying to secure a piece of the *mDos*.⁵

(2) The *mDos* is sometimes regarded as a "house" or "seat" for gods or spirits and is used for this purpose in some ceremonies, the supernaturals being invited to descend upon the thread-cross. In some cases, however, malignant demons, especially those causing illnesses, are compelled by the exorcist to leave the body of their victim and to enter a *mDos*, which is afterwards carried away to some lonely spot and there abandoned or destroyed.

(3) For counteracting the influence of evil spirits or for appeasing their anger, special thread-crosses are erected, e.g. as described by Waddell in the ceremonies "baring the earth and sky demons".⁶

(4) A *mDos* appears to be sometimes used instead of the dough effigy which plays an important part in Tibetan religious dances. Thus a huge *mDos* consisting of three different parts and bearing the symbols of sun, moon and the wish-granting jewel on its top, is used at the religious dance of the *Karma pa* monastery *Pho brang dgon pa rdo brtsug* in Darjeeling.

Various names are given by the Tibetans to certain parts of the thread-cross. The stick which forms the central vertical axis, is called *Srog shing*, "life tree", a spider-web like part of a huge *mDos*, constructed with the help of four sticks, is called *dPal dbyer*, etc.

According to the purpose they serve or the relation they have to certain supernaturals, the thread-crosses bear various names, many of which refer to groups of gods or demons of the aboriginal Bön faith.⁷ Thus one kind of *mDos*, consisting mostly of red thread, corresponds to the group of the *bTsan*⁸ demons, which are thought of as having red bodies; other thread-crosses are called "The secret *mDos* of *Pe-dkar*" (*Pe dkar gsang mDos*), "The planet *mDos*" (*gZa mDos*), etc. When constructing the thread-crosses,

strict rules concerning their colour, the way of arranging and knotting the coloured strings, etc. must be observed according to orthodox traditions. While the work is progressing, prayers and magic syllables (*dhāraṇis*) are chanted and the officiating priest breathes from time to time upon the structure.

Besides the sticks, coloured thread and tufts of wool, used for the construction of thread-crosses, several other objects are often required in these ceremonies. They are : various skulls of animals—thus at the ceremony of “closing the door of the sky demons” the *mDos* is fastened to a dog’s skull, while in the rite “closing the door against the earth demons” a ram’s skull is used instead—furthermore flat wooden sticks, covered with rough drawings of various emblems and images. These sticks, which are called *Tamshing* (*Khram shing*)¹⁰ by the Tibetans, were originally used by Bön priests as important objects in their ceremonies. Other related instruments are sticks with tufts of white or coloured wool on top and in the middle, called *Yetag* (*Yas blags*), cones made of dough—termed *Torma*,¹¹ *gTorma*—and images made of butter with the help of wooden moulds (*Zan par*). When preparing a base for the *mDos*, earth, straw and grass are used to build a series of square platforms, usually four in number, superimposed one on top of the other in decreasing size. On top of this the principal thread-cross is usually planted. This arrangement and some of the ideas connected with the various parts of the *mDos* itself show a certain parallel to the ideas connected with the symbolism of the Buddhist *Chōtens*¹² (*mChhod rten*, Skr. *Stūpa*).

So far little authentic information on the original use of the *mDos* has been obtained from Tibetan sources ; additional evidence on this subject can be, however, obtained from some neighbours of the Tibetans. It is well known to-day, that many of the neighbouring tribes, especially in the south and south-east professed or even still profess a religion, which seems to be very similar to the Tibetan Bön faith. The most comprehensive evidence on this question

is to be found in the religious beliefs and customs of the ¹Na—²khi tribe, who have been previously confused with the Mo-so. The ¹Na—²khi, a branch of the ancient Ch'iang live to-day in Southwest China around Likiang, their former capital. This tribe was carefully studied by Dr. J. F. Rock over a period of more than twenty years. Dr. Rock translated the greatest part of the comprehensive literature of the ¹Na—²khi and analyzed their religious ceremonies; thereby he showed that this tribe preserved in its beliefs and customs a very high percentage of old Bön traditions. The priests of the ¹Na—²khi, called ²Dto—¹mba, employ thread-crosses (¹Na-²k' wai in ¹Na-²khi) in a number of ceremonies. As in Tibet, these ¹Na-²k'wai are regarded as "seats" for either gods or demons. But we also find other beliefs. Thus it is reported in ¹Na-²khi books, that ²Dto-¹mba ³Shi-²lo (who is identical with the Tibetan *gShen rabs mi bo*, the founder of the Bön religion), was transformed at the moment of his death into a thread-cross, while on the so-called *Ha"-shi-pi*, which is used at funeral ceremonies, ²Dto-¹mba ³Shi-¹lo's horse is figured carrying a ¹Na-²k'-wai.¹⁴ Another belief is that the ²Ba-¹d'a, the warriors who accompany some of the ¹Na-²khi deities, originated from thread-crosses in the intermediary space between heaven and earth.¹⁵ We should finally notice that drawings of ¹Na-²k'-wai are often found in the pictographic script of the ¹Na-²khi.

To Dr. Rock we are also indebted for the information that thread-crosses are used by the ancient Hapa sect, members of which are still living in the territory of Muli (*Mi li*) and Yung-ning in Southwest China. The Hapa erect elaborate thread-crosses for averting hail.¹⁶ These structures, called *Nyata* by the Hapa sorcerers, are renewed after three or four years. As Dr. Rock obtained a Hapa manuscript,¹⁷ written in Tibetan and dealing with the ceremony of erecting a thread-cross for the demon-king Pe-dkar we can expect to receive valuable information on this subject later on.

Unfortunately, less is known about the use of thread-crosses among other near or more distant neighbours of the

Tibetans. They are reported to be used by the Mongols who call them *ŋnge*, "colour", makhabut "body" or tor-gaguli "obstacle", the last name certainly referring to their ritual purpose. It seems, however, that their use has become very rare in Mongolia in more recent times.¹⁸

Other reports show that thread-crosses are used by the Kachin and some of the Naga tribes, especially in death ceremonies, and for averting or destroying evil.¹⁹

Further to the southwest we find, that thread-crosses are extensively used in the religious ceremonies of the Lepchas of Sikkim. The Lepchas, who adhere today to Tibetan Buddhism, have preserved some practices of their original religion, which—after the name of its priests—is called the Mun religion.²⁰ Consequently there is a mixture of rites and beliefs of both religions and it is very difficult to state with certainty, which of the rites and religious ideas originated from the Mun or from Lamaism. This situation is made still more complicated by the fact that the Buddhist teachings introduced into Sikkim were those of the unreformed *rNying ma pa*, the "Old Sect", which preserved in its religious practices many customs originating from the Bön, which, however, have scarcely been studied up to now.

How closely the Mun religion and Lamaism became associated among the Lepchas is shown by the fact that many of the Lepcha ceremonies are concurrently performed by Mun priests and lamas.

Thread-crosses are called in Lepcha *deu*—corresponding to the Tibetan *Do*, *mDos*—or *Yeu*, an equivalent of the Tibetan *Ye*, *Yas*. As to the meaning of the thread-cross, it is generally regarded by Lepcha lamas as a "seat", "house" or "place" for supernatural beings. The tufts of wool, which are fastened to the thread-cross or are placed on top of bamboo sticks planted near the structure are supposed to represent clouds, surrounding the "palace".

The remainder of this paper consists of details of Lepcha ceremonies in which thread-crosses are used. Some of these ceremonies have already been described and only short accounts will be given of these; in most cases there

are some new details on the composition or use of the thread-cross.

1. THE CHERIM CEREMONY

This ceremony, consisting of three parts, takes place twice a year in honour of the mountain god of Kanchenjunga (*Gangs chan mdzod Inga*, "The five glacier treasures"), as well as for appeasing evil spirits, to protect the crops from hail and men from diseases. It is partly performed by Mun, partly by lamas, who officiate during the last third of the rite. As a description of the ceremony itself has already been given previously,²¹ we shall mention here only the third part of the rite and the form of the thread-cross used herein.

This part is performed by the lamas who direct their sacrifice to all the gods and demons; the main sacrifice is made to the mountain god Kanchenjunga²² and the "gods of the plains". The essential part of the rite consists in erecting a *deu*, the construction of which starts some four hours earlier. The *deu* consists of nine storeys, made of blue, red, yellow and white thread.²³ This thread-cross is called *mamoo yam deu*.

The Lepcha lamas explain that this structure is erected to appease the malignant ghost of a Tibetan king, who was called Dayom Panoh, "king Dayom". During his lifetime enemies destroyed his palace and when he died his ghost started roaming around and harming people out of revenge. The *deu* should provide a nine-storied palace and entice him to return to Tibet.

Besides the *deu*, an image of a female supernatural being, called *mamoo*, is erected. The effigy of the *mamoo* is made out of ground millet and buckwheat dough. The *mamoo* is represented with outstretched hands, riding a tiger. On her breast she is wearing a necklace, made of butter, while the lower part of her body is covered by a garment, indicated by scratches in the dough. The supernatural being has snakes instead of hair and wears a five-lobed crown, apparently similar to that worn by Tantric lamas.

This image is placed upon a base, formed by covering a bamboo stretcher with earth and braken and superimposing upon it squares of turf, each smaller than the other, with the grass facing down. The nine-storied *deu* is planted into the topmost turf immediately behind the figure. On the lower steps of the base, a great number of cones made of dough and covered with pieces of coloured cotton is placed. These cones, called *diget*, represent the servants of the *mamoo*. On the four corners of the second layer, four *yeu* are planted : in front in the right-hand corner blue, on the left white, in the rear left yellow and in the rear right red. In the topmost layer as well as into the second one, several flat wooden sticks, called *Tamsing* by the Lepchas, and small sticks bearing tufts of wool—termed *pong* or *bamgyal*—are planted. On the lowest step, a wall called *po ryum*, with a gap in front, is erected around the last turf square. Opposite this gap, inside the enclosure, four small vessels containing milk, tea and strained Lepcha beer are placed. On the right and left outside of the wall, crossed arrows and spindles are stuck into the base, the arrows being put on the right, the spindles on the left, when facing the structure. According to the explanation given by the priests, the arrows represent the male element, while the spindles stand for the female. Finally, various flowers are put around the lowest base.

The ceremony is continued by offering food and various objects to the *mamoo* and other spirits and then by chanting of prayers. Towards the evening, when the ceremony comes to an end, the *deu* with the dough images is carried across three streams and then thrown away. If the images are eaten by animals within three days, it is regarded as a sign that the gods were pleased with the offerings made to them ; if the effigies remain untouched, bad fortune may be expected in the near future.

There are several similarities to be found between this Lepcha rite and old Tibetan religious customs and thoughts. The name of the special thread-cross, *mamoo yam deu*, is derived from Tibetan. Indeed, one of the Tibetan thread-

crosses is called *ma mo mDos*, "The thread-cross of the *ma mo*" and is dedicated to supernatural beings called *ma mo*. This thread-cross seems to be an especially important form, as there is a special Tibetan book on its construction. The *ma mo*'s are represented by Tibetan artists as fierce and terrifying female demons; they are frequently met with in Tibetan iconography, where twelve Great *ma mo*'s (*ma mo chhen mo*) accompany Yama (*gShin rje*) as his messengers.²⁴ Since the *mamoo* of the Lepchas is also a female deity and as she has snakes instead of hair and is riding a yawning tiger, she should be regarded as a malignant spirit, most probably belonging or at least related to the *ma mo* group of the Tibetans.

The second syllable in the name of the thread-cross *yam*—seems to correspond to the Tibetan honorific expression for mother, *yum*. This Tibetan word is frequently used in the names of lamaist goddesses and particularly denotes the female consorts or "energies" of Tantric gods. As already mentioned, the word *Deu* corresponds to the Tibetan word *mDos*.

It is interesting to note that this thread-cross is nine-storied, as the number nine is very frequently used in the Bön religion, where many of the deities are depicted as nine headed, are placed into groups of nine, etc.²⁵ The colour of the thread used for constructing the big *Deu*²⁶ and especially the colour of the four smaller thread-crosses which are planted in the four corners of the topmost square is nearly identical with the colours attributed to the four main quarters of the world by lamaist traditions: East white (or brown), South yellow (blue), West blue-green (red) and North black (yellow).

As for the story of the Tibetan king Dayom it was not possible to find a parallel in Tibetan mythology. But it may be mentioned, that in an old Tibetan record recently made available in a translation by Prof. Tucci, it is said that the king of the *bDud* demons, called *Mi byams pa khrag po*, "The merciless with the bloody face", was living in a black castle with nine storeys or pinacles.²⁷

It has already been mentioned that some of the symbolism of the Tibetan thread-crosses corresponds to that of the Buddhist Chotens. In the present case the four steps, formed by the bamboo-bracken fern base and the three squares of turf, correspond to the four steps of a Choten. The Lepcha name for these steps, *bangrim*, is identical with the respective Tibetan expression, *bang rim*.

Several of the other implements used in this ceremony are also well known from ancient Tibetan rites. Thus the wooden slabs, which are planted into the turf on the side of the main effigy and which are called *tamsing* by the Lepchas, are identical with the Tibetan *khram shing*, already mentioned. As for the *pong* or *bamgyal*—the former word appears to originate from Lepcha, while the latter was derived from Bön terminology—the sticks carrying tufts of wool, we know that wool was used frequently by Bön priests. Thus those *bonpos*, who belonged to a sect called *sNang gshen*, had tufts of wool on their foreheads, while those of the *hPhrul gshen*, sect used coloured thread of wool as their emblem. Adherents of the last mentioned sect are reported as having been especially efficient in the construction of *mDos* and *Yas*.²⁸

We find a parallel for the connection between arrows and thread-crosses in a recently published *thang-ka* (painted scroll) of the Mongolian war god. On the lower part of this picture there is a hand, consisting of alternating thread-crosses and arrows.²⁹ Another similarity is perhaps the use of flowers, as a group of "Bön flowers" is mentioned in Bön scriptures. Finally, the ritual throwing away of the effigies also occurs in an important ancient ceremonies of Bön origin, called *lTo* or *gTo*, in which an effigy, regarded as a scape-goat, (*glud*³⁰) is thrown away.

2. CEREMONY FOR KEEPING AWAY ILLNESS

At the beginning of the rite a basket is filled with earth and on top of it three concentric, decreasing, square turfs are placed. The basket, arranged in this way, is called

rum by the Lepchas. In the centre of the topmost base a dough image is placed together with a big white *den*. The image is said to represent the spirit "King Gebu". He is accompanied by four lesser supernatural beings and one minister. All six images are made of rice dough. On the four corners of the square, four *Yeu* are placed, two white in front, a red and a yellow one in the rear. To each of these four *yeu* two *tamsing* and two *pong* are added, together with a strip imprinted with nine birds. On the step below, nine cones are placed, representing four ministers and five servants. Again, a band with representations of nine land animals is added. On the third storey, a great number of small images, representing male and female spirits, is placed. Into the lowest storey, eight arrows and eight spindles are planted and finally the whole structure is surrounded by various flowers. Later five cups, filled with Lepcha beer, tea and some bitter tasting liquid, are placed in front and several other implements, among them another image made of rice and with butter ornaments, are laid near the main *den*. After burning incense, the officiating priests pray to the gods, to spare the population from illness.

As in the first rite, the number nine plays an important part and we find here again the various objects, which were said to be originally used in the ceremonies of the Bonpos.

3. SACRIFICE TO THE HAIL-DEMON DEBRONG PANOH

Debrong Panoh, "King Debrong", is a hail and thunder supernatural being who must be propitiated to prevent hail from ruining the crops. He is pictured as having nine faces, eighteen hands and a thousand eyes. His ritual is similar to that of Gebu Panoh. First a basket, with straw or dry leaves on the bottom, is filled with earth and afterwards again three concentric squares of turf are put on top. In the centre of the topmost square a dough image of Debrong Panoh is placed. This effigy, however, in contrast to the verbal description, has only one head and two hands. It holds a bow and a rope—perhaps the Tibetan

ritual snare, *Zhags pa*—in the left hand and an umbrella as well as an arrow in the right. The image of Debrong Panoh is accompanied by four effigies, representing his four ministers, which are placed in the four corners of the top square. On the second, third and fourth stage stand images of servants and lesser male and female supernatural beings; in front of the altar five cups containing milk, tea and strained Lepcha beer are placed. Finally, all sorts of grain are thrown into the basket and small twigs of various useful fruit trees are set around it. When the first part of the ceremony is finished, two images of Debrong Panoh's parents are made and set on two wooden plates. The image of Debrong Panoh's father is called *chien lut*, that of his mother *looh lut*. Then three pots, filled with tea, milk and strained beer, are put in front of each image and afterwards a white *yeu*, together with two *tamsing* and *pong* is set on the table of Debrong Panoh's father. Likewise, a white *yeu*, again with two *tamsing* and two *pong* is placed upon the tray of the *looh lut*. Then a multi-coloured *den* is placed on the image of Debrong Panoh itself, as well as four smaller thread-crosses in the four corners of the topmost square. The two *yeu*, which are set in front, are both white, those behind red and blue. Again, each *yeu* is accompanied by two *tamsing* and two sticks with tufts of wool.

Now the basket, containing the main image, is put upon a low table in front of the main structure, while the wooden plates with the images of Debrong Panoh's parents are placed to its right and left sides. Two pots filled with water are added—"for the gods to wash their hands and faces"—and two containers full of rice and again a cup filled with water—"for the gods to drink"—and then some strained Lepcha beer, cooked meat and rice are mixed together in a vessel by the officiating lama. Afterwards, while prayers are chanted to the accompaniment of music of the temple orchestra, offerings of rice and water are thrown out to the gods and finally a path, leading from the basket to the door, is made with powder. When this is finished, the central *den* is removed from the basket and

carried out, while the basket and the two wooden plates are dragged along the path to the door. Once in the open, the basket is put in a tree, the *Chien lut* carried away to some other place and the image of Debrong Panoh's mother is thrown into the water-fall of a stream.

This rite contains some of the Bón elements mentioned before ; further more this thunder and hail demon strongly resembles the appearance of gods as described by the Bonpos. Like many of the Bón deities, it is the personification of a natural phenomenon, depicted in the usual Bonpo manner, with nine faces and eighteen hands.

(5) For exorcising an evil spirit, who is causing an illness, several books must be chanted by a lama and two *deu*, called in Lepcha *chemen gedo* and *lumoo gedo* set upon a path. These Lepcha expressions are derived from the Tibetan terms *mTsho sman rgyal mdos* and *kLu mo rgyal mdos*, which are applied for two different kinds of thread-crosses, dedicated to certain groups of Nagas (*kLu*).

(6) While curing the illness, which had befallen a child, a horoscope was cast by a lama and it was decided that besides other rites a red thread-cross, called *Tsen Deu*, should be constructed. This *deu* is doubtlessly identical with a red *mDos* of the Tibetans, the *bTsan mdos* (pronounced *Tsen do*), which is constructed for averting the evil influence of the red *bTsan* demons.³¹

4. CEREMONY, PERFORMED BY LAMAS AND MUN FOR AVERTING AN ILLNESS

After a Mun has sacrificed an ox, some lamas erect a *torma* and sprinkle consecrated water and then make a tortoise, called *robe* in Lepcha—which corresponds to the Tibetan *Rube*, *Rus sbal*—which is drawn with its belly upward in powdered rice on a large mat. Afterwards, a square with various numbers, called *Miwua* (in Tibetan *sMe ba*)³², is inscribed upon the body of the tortoise, in the following way :

4	9	6
3	5	1
8	2	7

On the junction of 5 and 2, a plate is placed, containing an image of the invalid dressed with parts of his clothes. This effigy is surrounded by cones, representing years, and twisted pieces of dough which are waved over the invalid for exorcising the evil influence.³³ The effigy is surmounted by a *yeu* made of black, red, yellow and white thread and on both sides of the thread-cross some *tamsing* and *pong* are placed. Then various objects are laid upon each field of the magic diagram: Leaves of a tree called *gevo kanoh*, twisted pieces of dough, several triangular tormas surmounted by *yeu*—one of them in blue, the others white—a phallus-shaped cone tipped with butter,³⁴ and a bamboo holder containing water and surmounted by a flag, called Tarchoh. In the central square is placed a heap of bones consisting of six skulls of dogs and goats and two breastbones of sheep. After chanting prayers, burning incense and presenting offerings to the spirits, butter lamps are lit and a bow and a rope made of yak hair are brought into the room. This rope, which is called *sanong takpo* (it may be mentioned, that *Thag pa*, is the expression for rope in Tibetan) is reported to be used only in this ceremony.

Finally, a basket is taken by a friend of the family and held outside the house in front of the door. When the tray bearing the image of the invalid is incensed and the officiating priest addresses himself to the spirits telling them that they receive a substitute for the sick person, whom they should therefore release from their influence. At this moment, the invalid's father enters the room wearing a black cloth upon his shoulders and steps upon the central square of the tortoise. A stick is handed over to him, which he rests against his right big toe, while a helper pushes the heap of skulls previously placed upon this square, against his heels. Then the yak hair rope is drawn over the father's head, starting from his back, and placed against his ankles, while the tray containing the image of the sick person is lifted over his head and put into a basket, filled with leaves and grain. The father is then given a drink of water, which he spits into the basket. The contents of this are moved to

a bigger container. The father now steps from one square of the drawing to the other ; his black cloth is removed when reaching square 7, while a black *yau*, which was placed upon this square, is replaced by a white one. Then, after exchanging his stick for the bow, he proceeds to square 4, where he stops for a while, sprinkling Lepcha beer over the sick person.

In the last part of the ceremony, twisted pieces of dough are waved over the invalid as well as over those standing nearby, while prayers are chanted by the officiating priest. After making a path of ground rice towards the door, the image of the invalid is carried out together with all the other offerings and laid into the basket which is held ready outside the house. Immediately, the carriers have passed the entrance, the door is shut on them. Finally, the basket with its contents is taken to a river and thrown into the water while in the house of the sick the chanting of prayers is continued.

The ritual here described is again identical in its general outline with the *lTo* ceremonies. Many objects are used, which we identified as being important implements of the *Bön* priests : however, there are also some new elements. Thus the drawing of a tortoise bearing a magic diagram upon its belly often occurs in Tibetan representations, especially on objects used in astrology. In this connection it should be mentioned that among a group of minor Tibetan deities called *Sa bdag*,³⁵ "earth owners" a cosmic tortoise named *gSer gyi rus sbal*,³⁶ "the golden tortoise" is mentioned and that other *Sa bdag* are depicted riding tortoises. The Lepchas too regard the tortoise as a cosmic creature ; their lamas explain, that the *robe* is living in a subterranean sea and is kept down by the mountain Kanchenjunga, which rests upon its centre.

The peculiar flag, which is placed on top of the bamboo container, is also found upon Tibetan objects, used in rituals performed for the *Sa bdag*. Its Lepcha name—*tarchoh*—corresponds to the Tibetan *Dar lchog*, pronounced *Darcho*.

6. THE GYAPCHI KLON CEREMONY

This complicated ceremony is carried out concurrently by lamas and Mun priests in order to free a sick person from the evil influence of certain spirits, the presence of which was recognized by divination. As this rite has already been described elsewhere,³⁷ only the image used and the various thread-crosses will be described.

During this ceremony, five images are made of buckwheat dough and placed in front of an altar-like structure. Four of the effigies, said to represent male spirits, are depicted alike, that is standing, with raised hands; some scratches in the dough indicate that they are wearing a garment. The names of these four supernatural beings are Chyong moong, Deut moong, Lho moong and Sher moong. Their respective colours, rendered in the same order, are green, red, yellow and white. The fifth image is that of Mamoo moong, a female supernatural being whom we encountered previously. Her image is black and she is portrayed with legs apart, the sexual organs greatly exaggerated. Behind each of the images, a *yeu* of the respective colour is planted, together with two *tamsing* and two sticks with tufts of wool.

Another image, used in this rite, is called the "house owner". It is surrounded by small butter discs displaying images, impressed with wooden printing blocks (the Tibetan *Zan par*). Some of these depict the supernatural beings who preside over the cycle of twelve years.³⁸ The image of the "house owner" is connected with one *yeu*, two *tamsing* and two *pong*. The thread-cross used in this case is multi-coloured.

7. RITUAL, PERFORMED BY A LAMA TO APPEASE THE FEVER DEVIL, DEUT-MOONG

After reading prayers, the lama, using bamboo sticks and blue thread, constructs a thread-cross, which is called *moong-ka deu bitomu*. After placing various sorts of grain, leaves, some fried rice and bread into the *deu*, he makes

a small image, which is afterwards connected with the thread-cross. Then the whole structure is offered to Deut-moong and finally somebody, who was designated by the lama, has to take this offering to a place in the forest where it is left to be eaten by animals. This ritual also corresponds to the ancient Tibetan *lTo* rites previously mentioned. In this connection it is interesting to note, that also in Tibet leaves or pieces of paper are placed in the thread-cross, usually in such a manner as to form the main features of a face. Occasionally a ceremonial scarf (*Kha btags*) is draped over the *mDos*.

8. RITE FOR AVERTING INFANTILE DIARHOEA

If several children die of infantile diarrhoea, it is assumed that their death was caused by a malignant spirit, called Sande moong. The Lepchas know two ceremonies for appeasing his anger. For the first a black dog is made with a rider on its back and two *yeu*, a black and a white one are placed upon the dog's head, while a red thread-cross is planted behind the rider.

The second ceremony has already been described elsewhere.³⁹ In this ceremony a life-sized cat with a very long tail is made out of dough. A rider, sitting upon a horse's saddle is placed on its back and four images of men are put in front of and behind the cat. The animal is led by strands of coloured thread, wound around its neck and held by the rider and the images in front. The rider carries a red thread-cross; on the left-front side of the tray a white *Yue* is placed, on the right front a black one, on the right hand rear a white and on the rear left a yellow. To each *Yeu* a *Tamsing* with wool of the same colour as the thread-cross is added.

9. EXORCISM, CALLED DEUT SHAGU KYOB

For curing a person who has fallen ill through the influence of an evil spirit called Hlamen Djeme Pum, a

ceremony—which again corresponds to the Tibetan *ITo* rites—is performed. An effigy is offered as substitute for the sick man or woman and afterwards carried far away from the house, in which the invalid lives. During this ceremony, also various thread-crosses are used. The name of this exorcism is nearly identical with the name of a Tibetan ceremony, called Dushel-gugyur (*bDud zhal dgu hsgyur*), “transferring the nine-faced *bDud*- demon”. A treatise, composed by the well-known Indo-Tibetan mystic Pad-masambhava, describing the performance of this ceremony, is reported to exist in Tibet.

10. KEEPING AWAY ILLNESS AND DEATH FROM A HOUSE

When divination has revealed that a household is in danger of being attacked by spirits of illness and death, a ceremony called Nambo Sagor must be held by the lamas. First a dog's skull is hung over the door by means of a rope, to keep away all diseases which come over the ground. Then a pig's skull is buried under the fire-place, to keep away the diseases above it. While this is done, other lamas chant from books; rice and sacred water are sprinkled and a *torma* as well as a *yeu* are made. This ceremony shows a similarity to the Tibetan rites described by Waddell which are performed to protect a house from the influence of the *Sa bdag*.

11. CURING AN ILLNESS BY MEANS OF THE GO SUM RITE

This is a complicated ceremony, concurrently performed by lamas and Mun priests, during which a hemaphrodite image with three heads is erected. This effigy has a distinctly Tibetan name: it is called Nagpo Gosum (in Tibetan spelling *Nag po mgo gsum*), “the black three-headed one”. It has two hands and its three heads seen from left to right, are those of a blue pig, red ox and yellow tiger. Behind the image, three *Yeu* of the same colour as the respective heads, are planted, and two *tamsing* are

placed behind the two upraised arms. A cloth, in its shape similar to that worn by dancers in Tibetan religious dances, is hung upon its shoulders. As a comprehensive description of further details of this image is available elsewhere⁴⁰ we would merely draw notice to the detail that the navel of the effigy is formed by a tortoise with a magic diagram upon its belly. This tortoise was described when speaking about the sacrifice to the hail demon Debrong Panoh. This rite also corresponds to the Tibetan *lTo* ceremonies and is regarded by the Tibetans as being purely of Bonpo origin.

12. KILLING THE MALIGNANT SPIRIT AROT MOONG, WHICH CAUSES VIOLENT DEATH

For this ceremony, a big horse and four smaller ones, all carrying riders on their back are made of millet dough, coloured red. Behind each rider, a red *yeu* together with *pong* sticks is planted and the smaller images are then placed into the four corners of a wooden plate, while the bigger image is put into the centre. In front of this a black figure of the *mamoo* is placed, together with an inflated animal's bladder. Other objects used in this ceremony are symbols of the 12 years cycle, four pots containing scrapings of iron, tree tips, poison and water from five rivers and various crops in leaf plates, prickly plants, and again arrows and spindles. The rest of this ceremony is described in *Himalayan Village* (p. 352). The four red images of riders seem to represent spirits, related to or identical with the *bTsan* demons of the Tibetans, who imagine these supernatural beings as ferocious riders of red colour. The red thread-cross would be then the *bTsan mdos* (or *tsen deu* of the Lepchas), as used in rite no 3.

13. THE SHIDOOK KYOB' CEREMONY

If it is assumed that a person's death was caused by the demon called Shidook Moong, the ceremony called Shidook Kyob has to be performed. As this rite has already been

described,⁴² we will only note here those details, which are of special interest to our subject. Again, a base is made of layers of earth and in the centre of the topmost square a black thread-cross is planted, while in the four corners four small images together with the same number of *yen*, in white, yellow, green and red, are placed. Below, 13 other figures together with 13 black thread-crosses, 13 knives, 13 sickles and 13 bows and arrows are arranged. In front of this structure stands a pot with nine handles. Besides encountering here the number nine, which we already identified as the most important number of the Bonpos, we find here the number thirteen mentioned, which is also regarded as a ritual number of this ancient Tibetan faith. As for the name of the demon, to whom the ceremony is dedicated, it sounds very similar to the name of the so-called "foundation owners", the *Shidak* (*gZhi bdag*). They are a group of Tibetan supernatural beings who are supposed to dwell in the earth and when disturbed exercise an evil influence which might prove fatal to men.

It will be seen from the foregoing, that at the present stage, with the material available for comparison, it is impossible to state whether the Bön elements to be found incorporated in Lepcha religious ceremonies came from the original Bön religion, or whether they were introduced into them through the medium of the Red Hat Sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

NOTES

- 1 Spelled *Bon* in Tibetan. About the Bon religion see H. Hoffmann, *Quellen zur Geschichte der tibetischen Bon Religion*, 1950, and the notes given by Prof. G. Tucci in his magnificent new work *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, Rome 1949. For a sketch of this ancient Tibetan faith see R. Nebesky-Wojkowitz: *Die tibetische Bon Religion*, Archiv für Volkerkunde, Vol. II, Vienna 1947, pp. 26-68 (Bibliography).
- 2 The distribution and use of thread-crosses in various parts of the world were described by W. Foy: *Fadensterne und Fadenkreuze*, I. Ethnologica II Leipzig 1913., and by G. Lindblom: *Thread-crosses (Fadenkreuze)*, particularly in South America and Africa, Ethnos, Vol. V, nos 3-4, Stockholm 1940.
- 3 The main works consulted are:
 DAS S. CH. : 'The Bon Religion', *JASB*, Calcutta 1881 (p.196)
 SCHLAGINTWEIT, E. : 'Le Bouddhisme au Tibet', *Annales du Musée Guimet*, Paris 1881 (Plate XXXVII)

- WADDELL, L. A. : *Among the Himalayas*, London 1890 (Photograph on p. 387)
- WADDELL, L. A. : *Lamaism in Sikkim*, in *Gazeteer of Sikkim*, Calcutta 1894 (pp. 365, 368, 371—373)
- GRAHAM SANDBERG : *Handbook of Colloquial Tibetan*. Calcutta 1894 (p. 196)
- WADDELL, L. A. : *The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*. London 1895 (pp. 484-488)
- DAS, S. CH. : *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*, Calcutta 1902 (p. 676)
- FRANCKE, A. H. : 'Kleine archaologische Erträge einer Missionreise nach Zangskar in Westtibet', *Zeitschrift Deutschen Morgenland Gesellschaft*, Leipzig 1906 (p. 646)
- AHMAD SHAH : *Pictures of Tibetan Life*. Benares 1906 (Plates 29 and 40)
- GRUNWEDEL, A. : *Der Weg nach Sambhala*. Abh. d. Königl. Bayer. Akademie d. Wissen philos.—philol. u. hist. Klasse, Bd. XXIX, München 1915 (p. 94).
- GRÜNWEDEL A. : *Die Sternschnuppen im Vaidurya dkar po*. Festschrift E. Seler, Stuttgart 1922 (Note 5)
- FRANCKE, A. H. : *Tibetische Hochzeitslieder*, Hagen i. W. 1932 (III., appendix)
- SPENCER CHAPMAN, F. : *Lhasa the Holy City*, London 1938 (Photograph facing p.8)
- STEIN, R. : Trente-trois fiches de divination tibétaines. *Harvard Journ. Asiatic Studies*, Cambridge Mass. 1939 (pp. 318—321)
- RIBBACH, : *Drogpa Namgyal*, München 1940 (Photograph p. 161)
- LESSING, F. : *Yung-Ho Kung*, Stockholm 1942 (pp. 148-149)
- HUMMEL, S. : Geheimnisse tibetischer Malereien. *Forschungen zur Volkerdynamik Zentral-und Ostasiens*, Heft 2. Leipzig 1949 (III., appendix)
- JASCHKE, H. A. : *A Tibetan-English Dictionary*. London 1949 (p. 274)
- TUCCI, G. : *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, Rome 1949 (II, pp. 715, 740, note 33)

Numerous works describing the construction and the use of thread-crosses composed by various Tibetan authors; e.g. the religious compendium of the "Red Hats", in 63 volumes, briefly termed *Rin chhen gter mdzod* contains in the volume *Phi pa* the following treatises:

- (1) g Nas chhos dgongs gter ias dbang phyug ma yi zor mdos khyer bde bar bkod pa bzhugs so
- (2) gNam chhos mi hgyur rdo rjei dgongs gter dbang phyug zor mdos kyi bka gtad hthabs bzhugs so
- (3) gLing b hi spyi mdos kyi zin bris ra ga a mdzad pa bzhugs so
- (4) bDe gshegs yongs hbul ias gLing bzhi spyi mdos bzhugs so
- (5) gLing bzhi spyi mdos kyi las hgrigs
- (6) Thugs sgrub yang snying hdus pa las/mkha hgro gling bzhi srid pai spyi mdos chhen po zhes bya ba bzhugs so
- (7) bDe gshegs yongs hdus las/ srid pa khod snyoms kyi mdos bzhugs so
- (8) gSang bdag dregs pa hdul byed las tshogs dam srii glud mdos zhes bya ba ghugs so

- 4 See e.g. the report given by Ribbach in Drogpa Namgyal. As also stated by A. H. Francke, thread-crosses play an important part in the New Year celebrations (*Lo gsar*) of Ladak.
- 5 See Lessing's *Yung-Ho Kung*, pp. 148-149
- 6 Waddell, *Lamaism*, pp. 484 and *Lamaism in Sikkim*, pp. 371-373
- 7 A list of names of 14 various thread-crosses is to be found in R. Stein's *Trente-trois fiches de divination tibétaines*, p. 318
- 8 About the *bTsan* see Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, II, pp. 718-720
- 9 About this ancient Tibetan god see Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, II, pp. 734-736, and Nebesky-Wojkowitz: 'Das tibetische Staatsorakel, *Archiv für Volkerkunde*, Vol. III, Vienna 1948, pp. 136-155 (Bibliography).
- 10 See Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, note no 283
- 11 About the use of this important religious object see the comprehensive notes given by W. A. Unkrig in W. Filchner's *Kumbum Dschamba Ling*, Leipzig 1933, pp. 291-398
- 12 Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, p. 740, note no 33, and Indo-Tibetica I, Rome 1932.
- 13 J. F. Rock: 'The Birth and Origin of ²Dto-Imba ³Shi-2lo', Bull. École Française d'Extreme Orient t. XXXVII, Hanoi 1937, Plate XXVI
- 14 J. F. Rock: 'Studies in ¹Na-2Khi Literature, Bull. Ecole Française d'Extreme Orient t. XXXVII, Hanoi 1937, part II.
- 15 J. F. Rock: 'The Muan Bpo Ceremony', *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. XIII, Peking 1948, p. 53, note no 102
- 16 See J. F. Rock: *The Ancient ¹Na-2khi Kingdom of Southwest China*. Cambridge Mass., Vol. II, p. 389 and plate 389.—A ¹Na-2k'wai can be seen on Plate 229
- 17 The title of this MS is *Ju thig gi mo sgo phye bai dbang skor rgyas pa lags so*. It is now in possession of M. R. Stein (Paris)
- 18 Grünwedel, *Vaidūrya dkar po*, note 5; Lindblom, *Thread-crosses*, p. 94 and photograph on p. 93
- 19 See H. E. Kaufmann *Ethnologischer Anzeiger*, IV, (5), Stuttgart 1939, p. 235; Kaufmann: 'Kurze Ethnographie der nördlichen Sangtam-Naga, Assam, *Anthropos* 1939, p. 223; Kaufmann: 'Das Fadenkreuz in Hinterindien, *Forschungen und Fortschritte*, XVI, no 15, Berlin 1939, pp. 193-195; and *Ethnologischer Anzeiger*, IV, (6), Stuttgart 1940, p. 329
- 20 About the Lepchas, their religion, customs, etc., see G. Gorer: *Himalayan Village*, London 1938 and J. Morris: *Living with Lepchas*, London 1938. It is interesting to note, that the Mun priests are divided according to the rites they practice—into "white" and "black" Mun, a division which corresponds to the "white" and "black" Bon
- 21 Gorer, *Himalayan Village*, pp. 228—230; Morris, *Living with Lepchas*, pp. 152-162
- 22 This god who is mainly worshipped by the Buddhists of Sikkim, is depicted in Tibetan iconography as a king riding upon a white horse and holding a banner in his right hand, and a shallow bowl containing jewels in his left
- 23 Gorer, *Himalayan Village*, Plate 16; Morris, *Living with Lepchas*, photograph facing p. 154
- 24 Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, II, p. 725
- 25 Other numbers used by the Bonpos with preference are 7, 13, 18 and 360
- 26 In Tibet as well as among the Lepcha coloured thread is used not only for the construction of thread-crosses, but also applied when making various charms. Thus, for example, two sorts of Tibetan amulets, called *Srung skud* and *Srung hkhor* consists mostly of coloured thread
- 27 Tucci, *ibidem*, II, p. 718
- 28 Tucci, *ibidem*, II, p. 715
- 29 See the publication by S. Hummel, previously mentioned
- 30 Tucci, *ibidem*, II, p. 726

- 31 A number of local *bTsan* demons seems to be propitiated by the lamaists of Sikkim who regard them as spirits of diseased novices or ill-natured lamas. Waddell (Lamaism in Sikkim, p. 356) mentions a demon, called *Zla ba seng ge*, as the *bTsan* of Pemiongchi, *Lha btsan pa* as dwelling at Yangong Gompa, etc.
- 32 This magic square, the sections of which are represented in various colours, is frequently used in Tibetan astrology. According to the well-known Tibetan astrological work *Vaidurya dkar po* (leaf 452 a), the following supernaturals are supposed to dwell in the different sections of the square:
- On the first, white *sMe ba* dwells the Earth Goddess *Rab brtan ma*, the colour of her body is white and clear like a crystal, in her right hand she holds Mount Sumeru, lifting it up; with her left hand she grasps a vessel, filled with Amṛta (nectar). She wears a robe with train, made of white silk. On her head she wears a diadem of gold.
- On the second, black *sMe ba* dwells the King of the *bDud*, his body has a brilliant black colour, in his right hand he holds a *Khram shing*, in his left a snare; he wears a garment made of black silk. On his head he has a golden diadem.
- On the third *sMe ba*, which is blue, dwells *Sa bsen gdug byed*, the colour of his body is sky-blue. In his right hand he holds a rosary made of skulls, in his left he holds the *iChag lchiy* skull-cup. He wears a garment made of black silk.
- On the fourth, green *sMe ba*, dwells *kLu rgyal lba ru*. Her body is of brilliant green (blue) colour. In her right she lifts a precious vessel. She wears a garment made of green (blue) silk.
- On the fifth, yellow *sMe ba* dwells the King of the *Sa bdag, hjig rten bdag*. In his right hand he holds a precious vessel, with his left he lifts a white conch-shell. He wears a garment of golden silk, on his head he has a golden diadem.
- On the sixth, white *sMe ba*, dwells the King *sKye hgroi dpal*. The colour of his body is a brilliant white. In his right hand he holds a club with a thunderbolt on top, in his left he carries the precious victory banner. He wears a garment of white silk.
- On the seventh, red *sMe ba*, dwells the great red *bTsan*. The colour of his body is red, vermillion-like. In his right hand he holds a long lance, in his left the white-black die. He wears a garment of red silk, on his head a diadem of gold.
- On the eighth, white *sMe ba*, dwells the *Lha chhen dbang phyug che*. The colour of his body is a brilliant white. In his right hand he holds the trident, in his left a skull-cup filled with blood. He wears a garment of white silk, on his head he carries a golden diadem.
- On the ninth, red *sMe ba*, dwells the *Ma mo Dza mun ti*, who is dark-red. In her right hand she holds a sack, filled with diseases, in her left a coil of thread. She wears a red garment and on her head she carries a golden diadem.
- 33 These pieces of dough are called *chongbu tipku*; they are mostly waved over the invalid towards the end of the exorcism. They are used by lamas and Mun alike. The act of waving away the forces of evil is called *pek* by the Lepchas.
- 34 Butter is used in many ceremonies of the Tibetans and Lepchas; it serves also as material for making images, especially during the so-called "butter festival". Beautiful pictures (in colour) of such butter effigies, were published by J. F. Rock in his article 'Life among the lamas of Choni,' *The National Geographic Magazine*, Washington 1928, Plates I, V, IX, XIII, XV, XVI.
- 35 The Tibetan *Sa bdag* or "earth owners" are a group of minor deities, which was taken over into Tibetan Buddhism from the Bon faith. They seem to correspond to the *Sabdok moong* of the Lepchas, who are believed to live

in rocks and when disturbed by men can afflict skin diseases. The same is believed in Tibet.

- 36 Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, II, p. 722
- 37 Gorer, *Himalayan Village*, pp. 475—478 and Plate no 31
- 38 Compare Tucci, *ibidem* II, p.
- 39 Gorer, *Himalayan Village*, pp. 350—351
- 40 Morris, *Living with Lepchas*, photograph facing p. 130 and description pp. 128-133
- 41 For this and other information we are indebted to Mr. Nyima, former official of the Tibetan Government.
- 42 Gorer, *Himalayan Village*, p. 351

SOME NOTES ON THE BIKOM.

M. D. W. JEFFREYS

The chief of this tribe, known as the Fon of Bikom, was a few years ago world news because he was reported to UNO as having a multitudinous harem. An enquiry carried out by UNO has left the *status quo* unaffected. The tribe is a small one in the Bamenda Province of the British Cameroons, West Africa, and so comes under the guardianship of the United Nations Trusteeship Council.

The old chief—he is over ninety—is well known to me because I served for nearly ten years as the administrative officer there.

The account of these people has to be brief for lack of material. "Little is known of their past except that after sojourning in a number of neighbouring districts they finally settled in this country (a cold rugged mountainous area) where they arrived by following the so-called 'snake-road' under a headman called *Bautufwo mu* (lit. meaning 'one who packs up the old things'). They were itinerant blacksmiths and exchanged iron hoes for cloth with the Tiv people of Nigeria."¹

So far as I am aware the only previous mention of these people is by Migeod. He gives a few details on the naming of twins among them, a matter I shall return to later on.

In August, 1937, I paid a visit to the old chief who detailed the following elders to give me a history of his people, Tungum, Dja₇a, Nue, who came for the Tinella group and N₇o₇ Findo. The last two were naked from the waist up and had hairy trunks. They were dressed in loin-cloths dyed blue and white which, passing between the legs, was brought fore and aft over an otter skin girdle. They remarked that Big Baba₇ki (Kijom Ketshemu), Baba₇ki Tun₇go (Kijom Kiti₇go) and Me in the Fungom Native

¹ Bruens, A. p. 827, 1942-45.

Court area, spoke dialects of Nkom and that the languages of Bamesi_n and of Babu_ngo were similar. The similarity between Bamesi_n and Nkom can be accounted for by the fact that when Bamesi_n was attacked by Bali Kumbat they fled and settled among the Bikom until they decided to return to their old site.

The Bikom appear to have belonged to the Ndwobo group of the Tikar who were forced south by Fulani pressure. In Njoya's unpublished Ms. of the customs and laws of the Bamum, also of Tikar stock, is an account of a Fulani siege of Fumban, the Bamum capital. In this attack the Fulani employed negro mercenaries composed of Chamba and of Tikar tribes. The Bamum not only withstood the Fulani onslaught but finally routed and scattered the Fulani mercenary armies. Some of the Chamba settled on the eastern shores of the Nun marshes. As these people increased in numbers by absorbing local villages the Bamum decided to disperse them. These Chamba were attacked and driven across the marshes to settle in the Bamenda division where to-day they form the Bali group.¹ It would seem that at this time the Bikom also arrived on the western edge of the Nun marshes. The Bikom elders informed me that they were of Tikar extraction and had affinities with people beyond Banyo in the French Cameroons. This claim is a tradition because none of the present Bikom have ever been to Banyo or to its environs. The tradition is that these Banyo affines play the *njan* (a wooden xylophone) as do the Bikom and speak a Bikom dialect.

"The Bikom were only a small group then of blacksmiths. When they left Bamesi all, except two brothers and their families, returned to their homeland. These two brothers migrated along the so-called Boa road and settled first at Kuabo, then at Jottin and then at Din."²

The cause of the Bikom break up at Bamesi³ was

¹ Bali Nyonga ; Bali Ga'u ; Bali Kumbat ; Bali Ba'am.

² Information from Rev. Father Bruens.

³ Bamesi is one of a number of Ndwöbö towns also of Tikar extraction which constitute the Ndog Native Court Area, hence the name Ndog.

fighting against the Bamesi over fishing rights. The villages in which the alleged two brothers and their families settled are to-day settlements within the Banso chiefdom.

These settlements are of autochthonous people of which the first belongs to a widely spread vanished group, called Ntut by the Banso, while the other two villages are called Nolli. Around Jottin are found to-day the debris of large slag heaps, but the present Jottin have no knowledge of the people responsible for them. This hiatus in their local knowledge can be understood when it is realized that both Jottin and Din were successively raided and conquered by the Banso.

The occasion of the Banso raid on Din was that a consort of the Fon of Banso took refuge there and the chief of Din refused to return her. Five attacks were made on Din before it was vanquished. The Bikom had already settled in their present yrie, a cold rugged mountainous area at over 6,000 feet on a long volcanic spur which starts from Lake Oku, a crater lake. Here, exposed to violent tropical storms and severe lightnings, they have remained to this day.

The Din remnants sought shelter among the Bikom but soon found it was a case of "out of the frying pan into the fire" because the Bikom began to enslave and sell them. So the Din made peace with Banso and returned to their old site. The Banso later on had trouble with a refugee Ndwöbö settlement named Sukubu. The village head of Sukubu tried to set up as an independent state, whereupon Tamanjo_ŋ, the Fon of Banso, sent a bell to the Bikom chief to raid and disperse Sukubu and to sell as slaves any he captured. The Bikom Fon destroyed Sukubu. There is only one Sukubu man alive to-day and he is over 90 and lives in the Babu_ŋgo hamlet of Tsi_ŋgo_ŋ.

The Bikom migration was led, some say by Ndyinabo, others by Batufomu. They are still only a small tribe with some 6,000 taxable males giving a total estimated population of about 18,000 persons.

A slightly different version of their recent wanderings was given to Father Bruens when stationed at Njinikom,

the Roman Catholic Mission station below Laakom, where the Fon lives. Father Bruens was told that when the Bikom were at Bamesi, the Bamesi chief, alarmed at the growing numbers of the Bikom, suggested that each build a house, put in it their important leaders and then burn down the house.

The Bikom chief fell in with the idea and his leaders perished in the flames. The Bamesi leaders escaped by a secret exit.

At the next great festival celebrated by the Bamesi chief, the Bikom chief who had been invited to attend, discovered the deception. In his anger he struck the Bamesi chief in public on the head with a native harp, saying :— "In future your land will be small, it will be no more than a village of one chief."

The Bikom chief, fearing that trouble would now befall him and his people, hanged himself in the adjoining forest. Years later, a Bamesi man, collecting firewood found a large pond stocked with fish. He reported his discovery to his chief who arranged for a day of communal fishing. When the Bamesi chief had led his people into the water to catch the fish, the waters closed over them, drowning all. The place of the pond was the spot where the Bikom chief had hanged himself.

So much for the little local history that is available. The legendary origin of their culture runs as follows. A woman named Naga had, some say two, others three, daughters. Each became an ancestress of one of the three important families among the Bikom. Her daughters were Nikinti, the founder of the Ejui family, Bi, the founder of the Tinela family and Nando, the founder of the Atyaf family.

On asking why these three families were not called after the names of the foundresses it was found that the present family names defined the cultural status of the families. This, *Ejui* means "up or upper", while *Tinela* means "low or lower". No satisfactory meaning could be given for the name *Atyaf*, which has been said to mean

"mud"; but *Ejui* and *Tinela* conform with a system of dual grouping now found widely distributed in Africa.¹

As a group of blacksmiths they would not belong to a ruling family and so would be without a chief and the account of the origin of a king among them runs as follows. "The following incident is supposed to have been the occasion for the installation of kings in Bikom country. Once, when all the Bikom men were away hunting, the people of Mudyan, invaded Bikom land. Nakinti, one of the Bikom women provided them with food and tricked them to a precipice. There they were charged by the rest of the Bikom women and forced over to their death. From Nakinti's offspring a chief was chosen."²

"There are two stones in the chief's compound, known respectively as *Ekwi* (*Ejui*) and *Tinelar*, and a religious ceremony is observed over them at the time of the planting of the new guinea-corn. The chief will call on one man from each hamlet, and an *Ekwi* man with the chief will pour *mimbo* (palm wine) over the stones. A *Tinelar* man has not the right to see the *mimbo* poured over the stones."³

The explanation for this fable was that it was a punishment on the *Tinela* group for an attempt to set up a rival or independent chief.

Near the palace is a circle of stones. Seated on these the chief and his elders formerly decided cases and settled disputes. The chief may substitute a carved wooden stool for a stone seat. This court of justice is known as the *utvu*. It still functions unofficially.

"Administration is naturally more efficient in areas such as Bali, Banzo and Nkom where the authority of a single chief is recognized....."⁴ wrote one administrative officer. One of his successors did not hold quite the same point of view and wrote: "In four areas (Bali, Banzo, Nkom and Bum) the national authority is a single

¹ Jeffreys, M.D. W. 1946.

² Information from Father Bruens.

³ Evans, V. Unpublished Government Mss. Quarterly Report,

⁴ Colonial Office Memorandum, p. 6. 1935,

chief assisted by an advisory council. Although most people prefer to get the chief to arbitrate in their disputes rather than to make use of the native Court, the councils tend more and more to insist on reference to the latter as preferable to acceptance of the chief's decision in such matters...."¹

Among the Bikom the novel, Government created, Native Court is supposed to deal with the tribe's legal matters and justice. The Court consists of the Fon as president and is assisted by eleven members as councillors. So little work is done in this Native Court that it gives a false picture of the tribe. Thus, in 1936, the total number of criminal cases recorded in the Native Court was thirty-five and no serious crime, save one of kidnapping was reported, but how many and what sort of cases were settled in the *utvu* is not known.

Not far off, and near the tombs of the Fons and the mausoleum of the alleged foundresses of the Ejui and Tinela groups is the sacred stone called *iti*. The usual Nkom word for stone is *ngo*. This stone is used as a coronation throne in the crowning of a Bikom Fon. The story connected with it is that the first Bikom chief who arrived in this vicinity found this stone, and settling down alongside it, was eventually buried near it. Ever since then all succeeding Fons have been enthroned on this stone and buried nearby in the cemetery allotted to chiefs.

Not far from the *utvu* are two sacred edifices, one a properly built native house called the *ifum* and the other a shed, called *ntue*. The *ifum* is the royal mausoleum. The dead chief's body is washed and shaved and rubbed with *me jan* (castor oil prepared locally) and then rubbed over with camwood. The body was formerly wrapped up in bark cloth², the first kind of cloth that the people possessed. The body was placed on its left side with the palm of the left hand supporting the head, leaving the right hand free. All men are buried thus but women are buried on the right

¹ Colonial Office Memorandum, p. 12. 1938.

² This cloth was made from the *Fugum* tree.

sides leaving the left hand free. It may be noted here that the right hand is known as the 'man hand' and the left hand as the 'woman hand.'

The body was placed in an alcove off the main shaft and the entrance to the alcove was closed with camwood¹ before the shaft is filled in. There is no orientation of the dead. A stone is kept in commemoration of each dead chief and on the sacred day of their eight day week i.e., on Tubala day, sacrifices are made by the reigning chief and the names represented by the stones are conned. At such sacrifices the officiants and attendants must be naked from the waist up and the Fon must never be bareheaded. This form of dress when performing religious ceremonies is wide spread. It is found in Benin, among the Yoruba and also among the Ashanti of the Gold Coast.

Like most divine kings, the use of his personal name, which for the present Fon is Ndi, is forbidden. Not even his first or senior wife or next important court official is allowed to address him by his name. He is always addressed by the title of Fon (Majesty) Nkom.

A person, honoured with an interview with the Fon, will when replying in the affirmative say *mbee* whereas between equals the word "yes" is *aa*. When denying anything before the Fon, the term used is *mbee ngaŋ*. Ordinary individual merely say *ngaŋ* among themselves.

Another attribute of his divine status is that all twins born in the tribe belong to the Fon and after weaning are brought up at the Fon's court where the boys become *tsinda* or court heralds and the girls may become consorts of the Fon or be bestowed in marriage on village heads.

Twins in African tribes are associated with the spirit world and for that reason are either destroyed on the grounds that the spirit world is dangerous or else are worshipped because they are connected with the spirit world, in which case twins have stereotyped names connected with gods. Most of the Fons of the Tikar groups have this custom

¹ Camwood supplies a blood red dye and its use at burial may be magical.

which is also found among the Bini and among the Umundri group of the Ibo.

Among the Bikom the names used are as follows:

	Both boys	.. Tyua	Ful
	Both girls	.. Fien	Mbo
Mixed —	boy first	.. Tyua	Mbo
Mixed —	girl first	.. Fien	Ful ¹

The next child born after twins is called Ngon if a male and Bi if female. Twins are greatly welcomed, and as among the Yoruba, are called a "gift from God".

The successor to the throne is known beforehand and is the next eldest male in the Ejui family. When a new chief is to be enthroned, the Nkvifon, a secret society, assemble. The eldest male of each of the other two families then lead the chief designate to the Nkvifon. An Atyaf holds the new chief's right arm and a Tinela the left. After being accepted as the new chief by the Nkvifon the coronation ceremony is performed. Two of its steps are the placing of the new chief on the *iti* and then introducing him to the *ifum* where all the preceding Bikom chiefs are buried.

The history of the present king throws light on present Bikom custom. A Fon's consort named Funkun produced one son and five daughters. This son was Yuh. One of the five daughters died childless. By royal custom these princesses do not marry but cohabit with any free-born male they choose. From their issue comes the next chief.

Yuh became chief, the sister nearest him was Ko who had two sons, Ngam and the present Bikom chief. When Yuh died, Ngam succeeded him and when he died the present Bikom chief became chief because he was then the eldest royal male. Had there been a male by one of the three other daughters of Funkun, older than the present Bikom chief, he would have succeeded. The present heir is the next eldest of the sons of the three daughters of Funkun. Matrilineal descent is maintained, son does not succeed father.

¹ Cfr. Migeod, F. W. H. p. 95. 1925.

Continuity between the living chief and his predecessor must be maintained and this continuity is effected in three ways. The first is that the chief is enthroned on the coronation stone of the previous chiefs; the second is that the old buffalo drinking horn of the previous chief is handed to the new. If this drinking horn has to be replaced, the new one is consecrated by being rubbed against the old one and then is solemnly declared to be the same as that of Njinabo, the name of their first Fon. Though the chief may drink in public none may see him eat. The third way is the use by all reigning Fons of an old bronze spear, part of the sacra of the tribe.

All land is in theory vested in the chief but it is a shadowy control because it is not necessary for a Bikom to secure permission from the chief to start a new farm. All land with a homestead on it or containing permanent crops such as kola, remain the property of the founder or planter. There is a Bikom saying which runs, "The chief owns the people and the people own the land." The Fon has for many years continued to grow rice. The Germans supplied him with swamp-rice seed and he has continued to grow it ever since in the valley of the Metcham.

The leopard is royal game, and no matter who slays it on Bikom land it belongs to the chief and must be brought to him. The chief rewards the hunter who slays the leopard which is then eaten by the elders of the three main families. The royal emblem is a spider design, common to all the kings of the Tikar group of tribes. Nothing decorated with this design may belong to, or be used by, commoners. Njoya, the king of the Bamum group, by a royal proclamation removed this taboo from his own people.

The executive and police force of the Fon is the Nkvifon society. Membership here differs from the usual Tikar pattern. This difference may be due to proximity to, and mixing with the Widekum peoples. Thus, among the Bikom the sons of the chief are allowed to be members of Nkvifon. Elsewhere, these sons form a society of their own known as Ngirri. The Nkvifon uses the bull-roarer

and carries out decrees and orders of the chief. The execution of criminals was also in the hands of the Nkvifon. The society dances in masks at the funeral of the chief and other important tribal members.

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THE SANKHA BANIK OF DACCA (Anthropometric and Serological Status)

D. N. MAJUMDAR

The Shankhari or Sankha Banik of Dacca, like the Subarna Banik of Western Bengal, are an interesting caste, physically distinct from the other castes, high and low. In Dacca (Eastern Pakistan), they live in a locality, named after them, Shankhari Bazar, and they are known locally as a foreign element in the population of Bengal. Some trace them to be of Armenian descent, others believe that they are immigrants from Uttar Pradesh, or even from the Punjab, and affiliated with the great Khattri caste of northern India. Their occupation is manufacture of conch shells and bangles—and they use a semi-circular saw, with which they cut shells into fine pieces, out of which they make rings, bangles and necklaces, by polishing. A Shankhari, in ordinary usage is identified with the semi-circular saw and when introducing a Shankhari, one often, jokingly of course, show the movement of the saw, and the Shankhari, sometimes takes it as a compliment, otherwise as an insult. In social status, the Shankhari occupies a higher ladder, being one of the Nava-Shakhas, or nine sections of the artisan group of castes. The Brahmins take water from the Shankhari and most if not all the Shankharis of Shankhari Bazar in Dacca are followers of Vaishnavism. They worship Laksmi-Narayan, whose idol 'Narayan sila' is placed in a golden palanquin in the house of the Zemindar of Lakshmibazar, a neighbouring Mahalla to that inhabited by the Shankharis. During the last few decades, the Shankharis have figured prominently in communal riots, their proverbial hatred for the Muslims, finding occasional release in challenging the organized Muslim Communities of the contiguous Mahallas, who always have found them too tough and too closely knit. The road through the Shankhari Bazar, is a narrow thoroughfare, yet a short cut, saving a mile or so, and

is a crowded one, though its narrowness hinders easy traffic. The houses are built congested, one against the other, several storeys and old houses are rebuilt without demolishing them, with the result that each house is a multi-coloured building, or of different shades, and the number of families living in the same house may be counted by the number of rooms, and the additions and alterations to old structures indicate the partition of families as well as properties. The Shankharis are clannish to a degree, quarrelsome, and conservative. There are many rich families, and education is spreading among them. The educated among them do not follow their profession, and work as teachers and lawyers, and have begun to wield considerable influence among their castemen. The Shankharis are deeply religious, their women practise all the *Bratas* and festivals of the Hindus and frequent temples, and undertake long pilgrimages. It is an usual sight in Dacca to see the Shankharis, returning at night from their shops or business, pounding their heads, against the walls of temples promising not to commit any sin and the same promise repeated every night, so that what they do in the day, they atone for it at night, returning with a clean slate for the ordinary routine duties of the working day. The average Shankari is of very fair complexion, pale-wheat, women particularly so, and it is said that the beauty of the latter was the cause of their migrations into different parts of the country and their deep seated hostility towards the Muslims. Their marriage customs are similar to those of the Khatris, and an effigy of a Moghal, must accompany the gifts when they are sent to the bridegroom, after the marriage is over. It is therefore, interesting to know, the race affiliation of the Shankaris and below we give the data, both anthropometrical and serological.

During the anthropometrical and serological Survey of Bengal, organised and financed by the Indian Statistical Institute, we took measurements of 133 Shankharis between the ages of 20 and 45, and we put below the cephalic and nasal indices and also the average stature of the Shankharis.

Number	Average C.I.	Average N.I.	Stature
133	74.99	72.19	159.50

The percentages of the various types are given below :

SANKHA BANIK (133)

	Percentage	
Dolichocephalic Leptorrhine	..	30.82
Dolichocephalic Mesorrhine	..	12.78
Dolichocephalic Platyrrhine	..	6.76
Mesocephalic Leptorrhine	..	28.57
Mesocephalic Mesorrhine	..	3.75
Mesocephalic Platyrrhine	..	6.76
Brachycephalic Leptorrhine	..	6.76
Brachycephalic Mesorrhine	..	3.75
Brachycephalic Platyrrhine	..	0.00

The above table shows that the Shankharis are dolichocephalic, and meso, and do not show affiliation with the Brahmins and Kayasthas of Bengal who are predominantly brachycephalic. The brachycephalic percentage among them is only 10.51, the mesocephaly constitute 39.08 p.c. of the 133 subjects measured.

As stated above, the Sankharis do not resemble any other Bengali groups as is evident from the mean values for Cephalic Index, Nasal Index and Stature, given in the table. For the sake of comparison we have selected the Brahmins and the Kayasthas of Bengal [data taken from the Census Report vol. 1(3), 1931]. The mean values of cephalic index for these groups being 80.8 ± 0.26 and 78.9 ± 0.33 respectively, as compared to 74.99 ± 0.29 for Sankha Banik ; similarly for Nasal index the values given in the Census Report (*ibid*) were 68.1 ± 0.38 and 67.7 ± 0.62 for Brahmins

and Kayasthas, where as it is 72.19 ± 0.62 for Sankha Banik. On comparing the mean values, taking into account the standard errors, we find that Shankharis are significantly different from the Brahmins as well as the Kayasthas of Bengal who are predominantly Brachycephalic. The Sankharis are found to be short-statured with mean value for stature, 159.50 cms. as compared to 168.03 and 167.07 cms. for Brahmins and Kayasthas respectively.

From serological point of view also, we find that Sankharis are differentiated from various social groups of Bengal on the basis of χ^2 values given in table 2. Karl Person's χ^2 test (chi sq.) is a standard statistical test for differentiation. However, to make the paper self-contained the formula of χ^2 is given below :

$$\chi^2 = \sum \left\{ \frac{NN' \left(\frac{fp}{N} - \frac{f'p}{N'} \right)^2}{fp + f'p} \right\}$$

where N and N' are the total numbers in the two samples compared, \sum denoting the summation over all the four blood-groups, fp and $f'p$ denoting the frequencies in the corresponding groups to be compared, for the p th blood-group. Table 2 shows that χ^2 have been calculated for the set of Sankha Baniks compared to Hos, Birhors, Mundas, Bengali Brahmins, Bengali Kayasthas and U P. Khatris. These various groups were taken to show whether S. Baniks can be said to be an outside element in the Bengal Population. The source of the data has been given within brackets, many of the groups having been investigated by the author.

From Fisher and Yates Table III for three degrees of freedom, the 5% value of χ^2 is 7.81 as shown in the table II. When the χ^2 values of S. Banik with any one of the remaining groups exceed this value (7.81), we would say that the Sankharis can be differentiated from them on serological evidence. But we should not at this stage say anything more than what the data reveals. We should eagerly wait for a complete anthropometric and serological report which is expected shortly. The anthropometric data are being analysed by Prof. P. C. Mahalanobis in the Statistical Laboratory, Calcutta.

TABLE 1 : Showing the frequencies of the various blood groups for the social groups selected for comparison.

No.	Groups	n	O	A	B	AB
1.	Sankha Banik	194	38	76	56	24
2.	Hos (Kolhan)	186	65	59	52	10
3.	Birhors	102	32	36	24	10
4.	Mundas	120	40	36	35	9
5.	Bengali Brahmins	200	70	60	59	11
6.	Bengali Kayasthas	200	64	46	75	15
7.	U. P. Khattris	125	40	30	42	13

N.B.—The names of the investigators have been given in the table giving χ^2 values.

TABLE 2 :—Showing the χ^2 values.

No.	Groups Compared	χ^2	5 percent point for 3 degrees of freedom	REMARK
1	Sankha Banik (194) (Majumdar) and Hos (186) (Majumdar)	14.99	7.81	Differentiated
2	Sankha Banik (194) and Birhors (102) (Majumdar)	5.36		Not Differentiated
3	Sankha Banik (194) and Mundas (120) (Macfarlane)	9.08*		
4	Sankha Banik (194) and Bengali Brahmins (200) (Macfarlane)	16.49		Differentiated
5	Sankha Banik (194) and Bengali Kayastha (200) (Macfarlane)	18.59		Differentiated
6	Sankha Banik (194 and Khattris U.P. (125) (Majumdar)	10.91		Differentiated

*If 2% point is considered, $\therefore X^2 = 9.84$ for $n = 3$

Comparative Study of Sankha Banik with the Brahmins and Kayasthas
of Bengal.

	Groups	Cephalic Index mean + S. error	Nasal Index mean + S. error	Stature mean
1.	Sankha Banik (Majumdar)	74.99 + 0.29	72.19 + 0.62	159.50 cms.
2.	Bengali Brahmin (Guha)	80.8 + 0.26	68.1 + 0.38	168.03 „
3.	Bengali Kayasthas (Guha)	78.9 + 0.33	67.7 + 0.62	167.07 „

STUDIES OF THE WHORL ON HEAD-HAIR IN TEHRI RAJPUTS

P. C. BISWAS

Within the hair on the head above the junction of the two parieto-occipital sutures a single or more whorls may occur. The hair abruptly changes the usual course and forms a spiral. The direction of this whorl may be right handed (clock-wise) or left handed (anti-clock-wise). Sometimes there may be found two or more whorls. In that case the direction of the whorls becomes clock-wise in one and anti-clock-wise in another or both clock-wise and in very rare cases anti-clock wise. The little study which has been done up till now reveals no sex and age difference in the whorl.

I have examined 55 individuals of the Rajput caste of the Tehri Garhwal state of Uttar Pradesh. They are all of male sex.

TABLE I

WHORL	NUMBER abs.	PERCENTAGE
Single	51	92·7
Double	4	7·3
Triple	—	—

The above table shows the distribution of single, double and triple whorls among the Rajputs of Tehri State. Single whorl occurred in 92·7% and double whorl in 7·3%. I could find neither single triple nor individuals with more whorls or a whorless within Tehri Rajputs.

TABLE II

	SINGLE WHORL	DOUBLE WHORL	TRIPLE WHORL
Tehri Rajputs ..	92·7%	7·3%	—
Bengalis ..	82·5%	17·5%	—
Germans ..	93·0%	7·0%	—

Table II gives a comparative study in what proportion single, double, and triple whorls are present in Tehri Rajputs, Bengalis and Germans. Single whorl occurred among Tehri Rajputs 92.7%, Bengalis 82.5% and among the Germans 93.0%. Double Whorl in 7.3%, 17.5% and 7.0% respectively. Triple whorl has not been found in any one of the groups. If we compare the occurrence of whorls both single and double among the Tehri Rajputs, Bengalis and Germans we find that the appearance of single whorl among the Tehri Rajputs and Germans is nearly equal and same in the case of double whorl.

TABLE III

WHORL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGES
Single clock-wise ..	41	74.5%
Single anti-clock-wise ..	10	18.2%

The above table may give us an idea of the frequency of clock-wise and anti-clock-wise among the Tehri Rajputs. Clock-wise occurred in 74.5% and anti-clock-wise in 18.2%.

TABLE IV

	CLOCK-WISE	ANTI-CLOCK-WISE
Tehri Rajputs ..	74.5	18.2
Bengalis ..	61.0	21.5
Germans ..	74.0	19.0

The above comparative table shows that the single clock-wise whorl occurred more or less in equal percentage among the Tehri Rajputs and Germans and also the single anti-clock-wise whorl.

TABLE V

	TEHRI RAJPUTS	BENGALIS
Clock-wise-clock-wise ..	—	6.5
Anti-clock-wise—anti-clock-wise ..	1.8	2.5
Clock-wise—anti-clock-wise ..	5.5	8.5

In the case of double whorl three different types appear in the following order. 1. Clock-wise—clock-wise. 2. Anti-clock-wise—anti-clock-wise. 3. Clock-wise—anti-clock-wise. Among the Tehri Rajput only two types occurred in 7·3%, clock-wise—anti-clock-wise in 5·5% and anti-clock-wise—anti-clock-wise in 1·8%. Among the Bengalis all the three types are present in 17·5% of which clock-wise—clock-wise in 6·5%, anti-clock-wise—anti-clock-wise in 2·5% and clock-wise—anti-clock-wise in 8·5%. But for want of data I could not compare with the Germans.

From the above investigation I have come to the following conclusion that on the head hair of the Tehri Rajputs single whorl appears in larger number than that of the double whorl and clock-wise single whorl occurs in greater number than that of the anti-clock-wise whorl. The same thing occurs among the Bengalis and Germans. The above comparative tables show that in the occurrence of single and double whorls, and also in clock-wise and anti-clock-wise whorls, the Tehri Rajput stands nearer the Germans. This gives us an indication that there is some racial difference in the occurrence of whorl in head hair. To confirm this further studies are necessary.

In this connection I like to mention also that there may be some relation in the occurrence of whorl and head form. I think double and more whorls appear generally in the brachycephals and mesocephals and single in the dolicocephals. This does not mean that single whorl will never appear in the brachycephalic head and double whorl in the dolicocephalic head. Studies in this line may reveal the above interesting relation.

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RESEARCH NEWS AND VIEWS

At a meeting of experts on "the Preservation and Development of Indigenous Art" held at Paris (10-14th October, 1950), under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the UNESCO was advised to give encouragement and assistance to the work of recording all manifestations of popular arts and thereby contribute to the preservation of the cultural inheritance of a large part of the world, in view of the decline of popular arts with the rapid expansion of modern civilization.

A Bulletin published by the Education Clearing House, UNESCO, gives a detailed report of the proceedings of the meeting, including full texts of four individual reports on popular art in the Belgian Congo, in the highly developed civilizations of Peru and Indonesia, and in the industrial civilization of France.

The Conference considered it essential to regard the popular arts as a vital and developing phenomenon, like any other cultural feature of our modern world. They laid emphasis on the fact that our attitude towards popular arts should not be that of the archaeologist, concerned to preserve the past, but that of the sociologist, recording the dynamics of culture change in a society, seeking to predict the trends of future change. The experts recommended that the UNESCO should create an informed interest about popular art among official circles in order to save in time many forms of art that societies are rejecting today, considering the traditional forms as a stigma condemning them to the status of backward people, but which may provide a source of inspiration to the very people who have cast them aside, when they once more feel the need to turn to their own past history.

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In a paper published in the *Folia Ethnographia*, I, No. 2-4, 1949, Mr T. Bodrogi has given a detailed descrip-

tion of the hitherto unknown drums in Louis Biro's rich collection from New Guinea (preserved in the *Neprajzi Muzeum*, Budapest). The drums are cylindric or hour-glass shaped, and show a more or less constricted central waist line with the two ends widening to a funnel-like shape; they are made of wood, and one end is covered with skin of the giant *Varanus Indicus* to form the tympanum. The exterior of the drums is carefully polished and tastefully decorated in relief with beautiful designs including animal and human figures.

According to Biro, drums are a prized property of the Yabim, and the making of a drum takes a long time, weeks, even months. In this well-illustrated article, the author has given an elaborate description of the whole process of drum-making, from the felling of the tree for the wood, to the details of finishing and decoration.

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Endeavour, Vol. IX, No. 36, October, 1950, announces the foundation of the International Institute for the Conservation of Museum Objects, London, in the spring of this year (1950). Among the founders of the Institute are some of the leading authorities on the theory and practice of conservation, and the Corporation—the first of its kind, is to deal with the problems of the well-being of all kinds of precious things.

In conservation, as in other matters, apparatus and all types of instrumentation are relatively useless without a well-trained and competent staff. The need for such a body to establish professional standards and to encourage first class quality, both in knowledge of materials and in technical ability, was strongly felt. It is hoped that the new Institute will fulfil the need, and provide not only a training centre for curators, but also a machinery for consultation, advice, and cooperation with other bodies working in neighbouring fields of activity in order to reduce the risks and overcome the obstacles encountered in the course of conservation and treatment.

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Saddle and rotary querns of stone form an essential part of an Indian household. These things have become so common that few realize their significance in the evolution of our material culture, but according to known authorities in the field of technology, saddle-querns are one of the first mechanical devices invented by man 'to replace the oscillating movement by a continuous rotary'. This paper by Prof. H. D. Sankalia deals with the evidence regarding these stone-implements from excavated sites in India, and its bearing on cultural evolution in this sub-continent.

The earliest specimens of saddle-querns found in India go back to the Neolithic and even Mesolithic times. Since then, their form has varied from age to age, according to changes in cultural habits, and the final form used in India nowadays, seems to be introduced along with the introduction of iron. Whether there was any connection between the invention of the two is a point that deserves careful study.

Journal of the Anthropological Society
of Bombay, (N.S.), Vol. IV, No. 1,
September, 1950.

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Gonds are the most numerous of all the aboriginal tribes dwelling in India. Their social organization, customs, traditions, mythology, folklore and history have attracted the attention of a large number of anthropologists and administrators. Mr. P. Setumadhava Rao of the Hyderabad State Service, has brought out a useful study of the Gonds of Adilabad. Before the rise of the Rajput power, Gonds were one of the most important ruling tribes of Central India.

Mr Rao's study of the Gonds is interesting. He has collected the few pieces of evidence regarding Gond history, which have been jealously preserved in their myths, folktales, traditions and genealogies, and has tried to reconstruct their history for the last five hundred years. A chapter on personal names and another on the names of villages among the Gonds, discuss the basis for giving the names against the background of contacts with their Hindu neighbours.

A note on the Social Structure of the Gonds, on the work of the Gond bards called "Pradhans", who preserve the myths, traditions and genealogies and have made themselves necessary to the Gonds, and on the mythology and traditions of the Gonds including "Mulkhand" the Creation Myth, are illuminating features of the booklet.

Coming to the economic side, the problems of agriculture in Adilabad, the land economy in transition, the agrarian and forest policy have been discussed in connection with the State policy in aboriginal rehabilitation. The author has pleaded for a welfare administration of the aboriginals of the State, concluding that "the emancipation of the aboriginals of Adilabad from the age-long bondage of custom and superstition, and their economic amelioration with a view to making them peasant proprietors and prosperous yeomanry of the district, will depend on the degree to which the resources of the State can be effectively mobilized for the purpose."

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Can science transcend culture? Has culture anything to do with the natural laws, or is science supra-cultural? This problem of 'Science as a Social Institution' has been discussed by Dr Jessie Bernard, Professor of Sociology at the Pennsylvania State College (U.S.A.) in an article in the Scientific Monthly, Vol. lxxi, No. 4, 1950.

The Catholic Church's insistence that science should conform to the Church doctrine, Hitler's demand for science to serve nationalistic ends, and finally the subservience of Science to political ends in the Soviet Union, create a doubt whether Science is that "majestic impersonal, independent system operating the Universe, which man discovers and to which he submits", or is it just another tool in the hands of the political bosses, 'with all the limitations of its creators'.

No doubt, Science itself is a phase of culture, and no science can soar beyond the physical equipment necessary to gather and process its data; the effect of language on

science—the subtlest of all relationships between culture and science too cannot be ignored. True, that the development of scientific knowledge depends on the perception of problems, the latter, in its turn, depending upon the cultural achievements of the people. But scientific approach, in physical as well as social sciences, provides a situation where all kinds of idiosyncracies and suggestibilities are minimized. The function of scientific technique is to find ways to secure the standardized responses that constitute scientific “proof” regardless of class, cultural or personal biases. In this sense, Science is truly objective, beyond culture.

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In *Man*, Vol. I, July, 1950, Prof. W. Koppers of the University of Vienna, has published a paper, on what he calls “The ‘Sketch Book’ of an Aurignacian Artist”, giving a detailed description of some pebbles, found at La Colombiere, 45 miles north-east of Lyon, France, on which are incised figures of animals, the stones dating without any doubt from the Aurignacian period. The curious thing about these pebbles is that each one of them contains outlines of five or six superimposed figures.

Dr H. Mouvis of Harvard University who conducted the excavations (Summer, 1947), thought that the primary significance of such carvings was magical, that they were meant to be the “medium to commune directly with the spirits of the animal world for the purpose of successfully replenishing the all-important food-supply.” Prof. Koppers has expressed his doubts concerning the correctness of such a hypothesis. On the other hand, he has suggested that they might have served as “sketch books” for the artists of the old stone age. The reason for making a series of drawings on a single pebble, the author suggests, may very well have been a purely practical one : facility for the ancient hunter to carry it in his migrations.

REVIEWS

THE CHILDREN OF HARI

by STEPHEN FUCHS

(WITH A FOREWORD BY C. VON FÜRER-HAIMENDORF)

PUBLISHED BY VERLAG HEROLD, VIENNA,

(PP. XVIII + 463), 1950.

This is an account of the Nimar Balahis in the Central Provinces of India, an untouchable caste and as such is a most welcome and opportune publication. Although the study refers to a section of the Balahis, of the Nimar district of the Central Provinces, we do not think that the limited scope of the work should be taken to mean that the account is not applicable to other sections of the Balahi caste. As a matter of fact, this can be regarded as true not only of the Balahis but also of many castes living in close association with the Balahis. The study of the Nimar Balahis, is the second monograph on Indian castes, as far as we know, the first one was by Briggs on the Chamars, which also could be regarded as true of many allied castes of low origin.

Rev. Fuchs is a missionary who has spent over ten years among the Balahis, and has won the confidence of the people, as missionaries generally do by selfless service. The monograph has taken years to complete, 'during which time' writes the author, 'I was able to collect my material not only with the assistance of several native adepts in Balahi lore, but also by long and continuous observations of my own, in the most natural and casual manner.' The result of such cautious and planned research, must be valuable, and we congratulate the author for the total approach to Balahi culture, which speaks well of his methods. 'Books like these', writes Dr Furer-Haimendorf, who contributes the foreword to the book, 'should exert a stimulating and

constructive influence on contemporary social consciousness and thus help the cause of the people whose life and culture are described in these pages.' We fully agree with Dr Furer-Haimendorf. The four hundred and odd pages depicting the life and activities of the Balahis are packed with materials, and should serve as an example of meticulous research.

We are not, however, sure if the Balahi blood groups could be interpreted in the way, Dr Fuchs does. There is no dearth of blood groups data so far as U.P. and other parts of India are concerned and if a comparative study were made, more light could be thrown on Balahi origins. Probably Dr Fuchs did not have access to the serological literature of India. He takes the Mundas as 'related to the Maria Gonds, far to the east' a conclusion which many would not accept. Neither on the basis of blood groups, it is possible to trace the migration of the Balahis from the north-west. But that most of the castes have a mixed origin, we do not doubt, and as Dr Furer-Haimendorf has pointed out in his introduction, about the Doms of the U.P., the Balahis and also the Bhils must have absorbed Rajput blood, if by Rajput, we mean the Indo-Mediterranean in the Interior India, and the Indo-Alpine in the mesocephalic provinces like Gujarat and Bengal. The Rajput is a cultural group, and not racial.

We had thought that Rev. Fuchs has conquered his missionary prejudices, unlike many who have succumbed to them, but on page 436, he yields like every other of his colleagues, and makes statements which we think he should have avoided, not because they are unpleasant but more so, as they are not true. Writes Rev. Fuchs, 'The traditional Hindu religions as well as Hindu society as a whole maintain as a fundamental principle the inequality of man.' Continues our author, 'If this axiom does not fall, if Hindu religion and society do not accept a revision on this point, the untouchables are irredeemable as long as they remain within the Hindu fold. As long as this axiom is upheld, the untouchables' hope for salvation lies only on the severance of their connection with Hindu religion and society' (p. 436).

We would have wished Rev. Fuchs had approached Hinduism with the same insight and interest which he has shown in his study of the Balahis; he would have found the solution of the Balahi problem not in their severance from Hinduism but in Hinduism itself. If there is any religion which has withstood continuity of onslaughts, and passively resisted aggression, it is Hinduism, for the values it has cherished have been worked out from within the society, and every level of culture finds its place in an amorphous religious consciousness, which represents Hinduism at the level the Balahis stand today. I am quoting a few relevant passages from literature which unfold the spirit and the essentials of Hinduism to show how grossly inadequate his conclusion has been. We have reluctantly disagreed with the missionary attitude to anthropology, not because of dearth of competence among the missionaries, but because they have seen other cultures through glasses tinged with partisanship. Hinduism never preaches inequality of man, on the other hand equates with man even lower organisms. The following passages, a random selection though, will speak for themselves.

Isopanisat—V. 7 : The wise man who knows that all beings can be equated with his own self, feels such a unity that there is no room for grief or delusion.

Kathopanisat—2.5.12 : The one self-controlled, the self that appears in all living beings, the Being, who manifests Himself in diverse forms—he who knows (This Being) as abiding in his own self, is happy eternally and not others.

Bṛhadaranyaka—4.4.5 : Man is born according to the deeds that he performs. He who performs good deeds becomes saintly, he who does bad deeds is born as a sinner. By virtuous deeds one becomes associated with virtue. According to one's desires one wills, and according to one's will one acts and according to his acts he attains his status in life.

Mahabharata : *Vanaparva*—Ch. 180 : Yudhisthira says—'The caste is only nominal. If one who is called a Śūdra possesses the virtues of truth, making gifts, absence of anger and

cruelty, of non-injury and kindness, he is a Brahmin, and if these qualities are not found in a so-called Brahmin, he is a Sudra.

Yudhisthira further says that in the great mass of humanity there has been such an admixture of races that there is no way of distinguishing one caste from another. All castes are mixed.

This is also the view, he says of the Vedas and the Smrtis. Everything depends on a man's character.

Barring the solution of the Balahi problem, put forward by Dr Fuchs, the book as a whole is well written, full of interest and is sure to aid the rehabilitation of the Balahis. Books like these are welcome and we congratulate the author for his valuable study.

D. N. M.

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FISHING IN MANY WATERS

by JAMES HORNELL,
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS (1950) (PP. XV.+210).

James Hornell does not need any introduction. It is pity that the book could not be seen through the Press by the author, as he died in February, 1949, but he did complete a thorough revision of his manuscript, and also had passed proofs of many of his illustrations. But Prof. J. H. Hutton has done all that could be done and we are glad to have the volume before us. The book is one of the few books on technology we have and is a study of a particular kind of specialization in this case of fishing appliances and material. There are twentyone short but informative chapters, packed with details and competently presented and will provide comparative material, for those who are interested in technology and allied fields of research. We welcome the book not merely as an authoritative work, but also for the absorbing interest that it has revealed even to the layman.

M. M.

TRIBES OF INDIA

by A. V. THAKKAR,

PUBLISHED BY BHARTIYA ADIM JATI SEVAK SANGH,
KINGSWAY, DELHI, 1950, PP. 270, PRICE RS 2/8

This is a collection of 48 articles, contributed by 'experienced social workers', with a foreword by A. V. Thakkar. The death of Thakkar Bapa, so he was known to all aboriginals and backward people, for whom he dedicated his life, has removed from the field of Indian social work, a person of outstanding integrity and character. A life long comrade in arms of the late Mahatma Gandhi, his demise at this time is a national loss, for it is he who undertook the heavy responsibility of levelling up thirty millions of aboriginal people and twice the number of backward castes, wrongly classified as 'scheduled' or 'exterior'. We hope that the organization set up and inspired by him will continue to function for the task allotted to it.

The volume under review, in the words of Thakkar Bapa himself, is a collection on the basis of 'something is better than nothing,' but one would think that the social workers who have contributed to this volume, should have consulted literature on the tribes they have written about, for this 'nothing' does not mean the zero point but 'nothing in comparison to the literature that exist elsewhere, particularly in those countries with tribal and aboriginal people like Australia, Africa, America or Oceania. There are some first rate monographs on Indian tribes, but the contributions show complete ignorance of any literature either on the people they are writing about or those in general. We would point out one or two from among the statements made by the contributors to show the quality of the articles contained in this volume. On page 78, B. N. Machhava writes about the Gotul among the Madias (on which Verrier Elwin wrote a full sized monograph) as follows : 'Gotul is a noteworthy institution of the aboriginal villages or their place. Gotul

serves the purpose which the Dak Bungalows or the rest houses serve in the cities. Every village has a Gotul. A stranger or an outsider often stays in the Gotul, and his food and his other necessities are supplied free by the village headman.' Comment is unnecessary. We suggest that the organization responsible for the welfare of the aboriginals, should initiate a course of training for its welfare workers, so that we may not find it necessary to ask 'the physician to heal thyself'. This is why Verrier Elwin wanted the tribes to be left alone, at least they might be protected against such incompetence. Mere sympathy for the aboriginal is not the panacea for tribal ills; the social welfare worker must be fully equipped for the task allotted to him, otherwise, the wastage both human and material will recoil on social work in general and tribal welfare in particular. We are sorry that we had to point out this after the death of Thakkar Bapa but we hope our criticism will put the organization on its guard so that the future of the tribal and backward people may be safe in the hands of the organization.

D. N. M.

HAMARI ADIM JATIYAN (HINDI)

by SHRI BHAGWANDAS KELA AND SHRI AKHIL VINAY,
PUBLISHED BY BHARATIYA GRANTHA MALA, DARAGANJ,
ALLAHABAD pp 365 WITH A FOREWORD BY SHRI VIYOGI MARI
AND A NOTE BY SHRI B. G. KHER. PRICE RS 3/8

Shri Bhagwandas Kela's contributions to Hindi literature in the fields of civics and social problems of India are well-known. In collaboration with Shri Akhil Vinay, in this book, he surveyed the tribal problem in India in a broad sweep and made a vigorous plea for the sympathetic understanding of tribal needs and for putting in action urgent plans at relief and rehabilitation to save an already deteriorating situation.

The book is divided into five parts. In the first part the authors have given a general survey of the tribal cultures of India briefly writing on such diverse aspects of their cultures as folk-literature, folk-dance, religion and ritual, marriage, death-ceremonies, organization and their part in the freedom struggle of India. In the second part short accounts of some representative individual tribes like Santal, Gond, Bhil, Naga, Koya and Toda are given. To these is added a regional survey of tribes in the various states of India. In the third part the different approaches to the tribal problem have been discussed; the so-called *anthropological* point of view has been criticized and a welfare point of view has been upheld. In particular, economic problems, those of poverty, education, public health, culture contacts with the outside world and socio-religious and political development of the tribes have received the special attention of the writers. The fourth part describes the tribal welfare activities of the different states in the Republic of India; and the fifth—which I regard as particularly useful—notices briefly the different societies and associations engaged in active tribal welfare work.

The book is a welcome addition to Hindi literature in a relatively virgin field and the authors deserve our congratulations on their enterprise. However, I am not altogether happy about the choice of the appellation *adim jati* for the aboriginal tribes, for I am inclined to believe that *adivasi* is a more appropriate term and will be acceptable to a by far greater number of the regional languages of India. It has almost been a stock-in-trade of some social welfare workers and politicians to criticize the anthropologist for his *no change* attitude and for efforts to create that *anthropological zoo* which is perhaps a figment of their own imagination. The authors have not taken due account of the contemporary anthropological discussions on this subject. What we have been suggesting is a proper study of individual tribes and tribal groups and cautious planning for their future in the light of these investigations. The most signal service done by

anthropology to the cause of the aborigines, its analysis of both the wholesome and evil effects of culture contact has not found proper place in the book. Zeal for social service, as the authors of the book have, may be good ; but with an indiscriminating and uncritical mind it can also be deadly to the tender texture of tribal cultures. It is necessary to give due attention to this aspect of the problem. Further, it would have been better if the authors had selected their sources with greater discrimination. There is a great wealth of information on tribal cultures and institutions collected by trained observers available in the many standard monographs relating to the tribes. The authors have quoted at many places from casual observers with obvious approval. What was said by them may have been well intentioned and true as far as they could see it ; although there is a general tendency in such writers to mix up their feeling and emotion in what they write which mars the scientific objectivity of their descriptions. Besides, their casual observations invariably never rise to the level demanded by modern technique of field-research. Those who know the tribes closely will, therefore, find it difficult to believe wholly that some of the descriptions are anthropologically true. And one word more. In the list of anthropologists on page 341, there are some regrettable omissions. The contributions of Professor K. P. Chattopadhyay, Dr Irawati Karve, Dr Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf among others, I feel, should have been specifically mentioned.

I should however, commend the book as a useful and thought provoking compilation on the subject.

S. C. DUBE

VANISHED TRAILS

by R. L. SPITTEL.

PUBLISHED BY OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS (INDIAN
BRANCH). PAGES XVI, + 258 ; PRICE RS 8/8/-.

"Vanished Trails" is a well-written and well-produced *anthropological novel*, by Dr R. L. Spittel whose "Savage Sanctuary" was published in 1941. The Veddas, as a people, are well-known in anthropology, largely through *The Veddas* by C. G. Seligman and Brenda Z Seligman ; but that valuable monograph was published in 1911 and much has happened since then to change the socio-cultural fabric of this fast disappearing tribe. The author has presented anthropological facts in the attractive form of fiction, depicting in a vivid and graphic manner the gradual transition of the Veddas in three successive generations and has shown how they changed from a 'troglo-dyte food-gathering stage' to their present stage of 'the hut-dweller and pod-producer.'

In the *Introduction* the author has given a brief ethnographic description of the tribe, and has then presented his dramatic story which unfolds to us the realities of Vedda life, their superstitions, their earlier economy based on food-gathering ; slow transition from this stage and gradual adoption of a settled life and cultivation. Through a number of intimate pen portraits and character sketches in this moving tale, the author has succeeded in creating the true atmosphere of Vedda life. One closes the book with some understanding of and a deep sympathy for the *last of the Veddas*. The author has naturally earned our gratitude not only for this sympathetic description of a fast disappearing tribe, but also for his practical efforts to safeguard them from the disintegrating and destructive influences of modern civilization for which they are not yet ready.

S. C. DUBE

BHOJPURI GRAM-GEET (HINDI),

by KRISHNA DEV UPADHYAY, Ph.D,
PUBLISHED BY HINDI SAHITYA SAMMELAN,
ALLAHABAD.

In the field of folk-literature much valuable work has been done in Hindi. Ram Naresh Tripathi's 'Kavita Kaumudi' marked the beginning of a movement which was soon to gather a new momentum and an added strength. Devendra Satyarthi's sympathetic writings on the folk-songs of the different parts and dialects of India were followed by intensive and exhaustive work in the various regional languages. In Rajsthan, important work was done by Surya Karan Parikh, Narothamdas Swami and Jagdish Singh Gablot. In Bihar, Ram Iqbal Singh 'Rakesh' published an excellent collection of Mithila folk-songs, and now we have two rich collections of Bhojpuri songs by Krishna Dev Upadhyay.

The book under review is the second volume of his collection, published by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. It introduces twenty-seven varieties of folk-songs current in the Bhojpuri speaking tracts. The classification is based on the type of the songs i.e., songs of birth, marriage, religious ceremonies etc. have been discussed separately. The author has briefly given the context of the songs, followed by the original text in *Devnagri* Script and has in the end given their translations in Hindi. The introduction by the author is interesting as it is written in a personal intimate style. The notes in the end are very useful.

It would have greatly added to the scientific value of the book had the author given a scientific classification of *all* the different songs current in the area, and added ethnographic notes where necessary. Where religious rites and customs have been alluded to, want of full notes is very badly felt. Similarly, I would much appreciate if the author keeps his appreciations separate from the songs and their translations.

As the author proposes to continue his valuable work in the field, I hope he will keep these suggestions in mind while preparing the forthcoming volumes for publication.

In the end the author must be congratulated for his labour of love, his industry and scholarship. His work was done in a period when collection of folk-songs was regarded as a more or less thankless task which involved hard work with almost no reward. The author has done his work with competence which will indeed win for him the gratitude of all those who are generally interested in the cultural heritage of India and more particularly in its folk-culture. The publishers also deserve our thanks for encouraging such work, which was hitherto badly neglected in our country.

S. C. DUBE

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